

How We Met by unicorngirlie45

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Summary:

this is a short story how your relationship with Steve Harrington evolves over time.

1. beginning - "walking on sunshine"

Author's Note:

the new set pictures came out and so now I'm writing about Steve Harrington. it feels like the olden times. thanks for reading <3

You walked into the Family Video twenty minutes before closing. It was a Tuesday night in October and you had no company back at home, so what else was there to do than rent out your favorite movie? Exactly. The bell over the door ringed out as you pushed it open, but you were hoping no one would come out and try to help you. Or specifically you hoped that Keith wasn't the one to come and help you. Robin was cool, when she rang you up once she gave you some recommendations on horror flicks. Keith however always has some overly cheesy line to throw at you. One of these days, polite declines aren't gonna cut it. But you push that to the back of your head.

You can hear music coming from the back. It's faint and if you weren't focused on finding Jaws you would have missed it. And yet, something about "Walking On Sunshine" is just so attention grabbing. You look over the metal rack holding the movies and over at the employee counter. It's still vacant however, the door to the backroom is open. That must be where the music is coming from, you think. You also think about how Keith would probably listen to that song-unless it's some personal secret he has.

Getting back to your movie selection of the night, you look back down at the shelf. Your fingers flip through the cases until you find it. You might've asked Robin if she could hide a copy of it in a place where no one would look. The romance section. You hear the music come to a stop. On cue, you grab Jaws and head over to the register. Some part of you wants to ring the bell so you can hurry up the process of leaving for the night. (and seeing who exactly was walking on sunshine at 8pm in Hawkins) But you settle for clearing your throat and announcing yourself instead.

It doesn't take long before you see him. Of course you know him.

You've lived in this town your whole life. Everyone knows Steve Harrington. The two of you never interacted with one another. No Hawkins relies on cliches and inner groups and all that. There was no way Steve "the hair" Harrington would willingly talk to you. And as it happened you were never in any classes together, even though Hawkins is small. It seemed like the world didn't want you to talk to each other.

Until now.

He looks at you and down at Jaws.

"Hi, is that it?" he asks.

You nod your head. Somehow being in the presence of him is kinda weird. Not because you're nervous, you know he's just a normal person like everyone else. But because he's here working at Family Video late at night and you definitely heard him singing along to Katrina & The Waves.

He punches some numbers in the register and you see your total. You reach into your backpocket and pull out the exact change. When you give it to him you see an almost confused look on his face. His eyebrows are closer to each other in the middle, and his mouth is open a bit.

"Do you take another kind of currency here on Tuesdays?" you ask.

"No," he shakes his head for emphasis.

Steve takes the money and the bottom compartment of the register opens. He puts the cash in and pushes it closed. You watch as he reaches over for a bag and you stop him mid-way. You had no use for it really, it was just one movie and you have an empty car seat for it anyways.

"I was just gonna check it into the passenger seat, don't waste a bag on me." you say.

And then he chuckles. Its kind of soft and a mix between shock and maybe happiness, maybe?

"You're probably the first costumer to tell me not to give you a bag. Nice pick by the way." he says.

You shrug, "I've rewatched it at least twice this month already."

"It's only the second week of October."

"It's becoming a problem, which your co-worker directly feeds into."

His face scrunches in confusion again. Does he think your talking about Keith?

"Not Keith, Robin. She keeps a tape hidden for me in the romance section when she can." you answer.

He nods his head with a smile, "Probably shouldn't tell Keith that. I barely got hired here, but she got the job instantly."

"Ah, she told me about that. Thought I'm not sure about Children of Paradise."

"Yeah what about Back To The Future?" he asks.

"Eh, I'm more The Outsiders."

"I can respect that." he says.

Then he takes a pause. And you can tell because it's just a few seconds but they do feel like an eternity. And you know he's not holding you here, you can walk out with the movie anytime. But somehow you had managed to strike a conversation with Steve. And a tiny part of you didn't want it to end. But you just paid for Jaws and you were probably not gonna get your money back.

"I gotta go, but thanks."

"No problem, have a good night."

You chuckle and hold up Jaws. He winces and you chuckle some more. You turn around and head to the door. Right when you hand grips the handle you turn around and give him your name. He smiles at you.

"I'm Steve."

2. middle - "Holiday" / "Modern Love"

Summary for the Chapter:

a series of vignettes with Steve Harrington that lead you both to believe that maybe, you're not just friends.

Notes for the Chapter:

okay this might become my favorite thing to do. give snippets of a relationship evolving over time and adding in music. Also in my mind Tommy and Carol have moved away, far far away from Hawkins. happy reading <3

Steve's parents were out of town on some vacation or work trip. It honestly sounded like they forgot about Steve but he had told you that when they offered to take him, he declined. You knew that their relationship was strained at best so you didn't question it. And when he asked if you wanted to hang out while they were gone you agreed.

Since that night when you first met at the family movie, you two had started running into each other more and more. At first you thought that it was just the small town of it all. But then sometimes he'd be at the grocery store when you were, you'd catch a glimpse of him running down an aisle after one of the kid's he hangs out with. Or he'd be deescalating an argument between a couple of the kids in the middle of the hardware store for some reason. You're not sure when but at some point you walked over to him and started a conversation.

A conversation turned into exchanging phone numbers. Intentionally coming to the family movie because he was on the clock and he wanted to hang out with you. Or meeting him on the off-day that none of the kids needed him and his shift ended. All in all, you had become friends with Steve Harrington. And he had changed from the rumors around school and the things you saw with your own eyes.

So here you are, sitting on his roof and you're sharing a blunt. You don't know why you thought Steve didn't smoke, but now that you're

seeing it it's hard NOT to see. It's really effortless with him and he isn't coughing or anything. You've laughed a couple of times, it wasn't your first time but you wouldn't call yourself a professional. There wasn't much to do in Hawkins.

"I have something to confess." you say.

He looks over at you with his eyes wide. Yeah the weed definitely made him paranoid.

"What is it?"

"The night we met," you sighed dramatically, "I totally heard you in the backroom singing."

Steve let out a breath and starts to laugh. His eyes are squeezed shut and his head tilts back. You're looking over at him and you begin to laugh along. It had been funny keeping this secret for a month and change. Just having that little scene playing in the back of your head whenever you two talked. He gathers himself and opens his eyes finally. That's when you can see the streaks down his cheeks from laughing too hard.

You want to reach out and wipe them off.

"Is that what you've been thinking about every time we've hung out?"

You snicker, "Yes and I just gotta ask, is that your favorite song?"

"Yes and if you tell anyone I'll-"

You watch as he cuts himself off.

Steve was about to say he'd kill you for ruining his rep. But then he remembered that high school was over. This was his first Fall out of high school and he was no longer Steve "the hair" Harrington. This was the real world, where he could like whatever he wanted and not have to be subjected to Tommy or Carol's insults or jokes. No more Tommy or Carol. He was free to figure out who he really was.

"I'll have you know that's not the only embarrassing thing I know about you." you say.

"Oh yeah?"

"I'm not gonna give away any future blackmail I might have on you."

"I just think it's unfair because I don't know anything embarrassing about you."

You hum to yourself for a moment. Then you stop. You look Steve Harrington right in the eyes.

"I used to be a chronic booger eater in kindergarten." you say.

In real time, you watch him laugh again. His eyes squeezed shut, head tilted back. His body even reclines back too as he claps his hands together. You don't laugh this time. Not because you think what you said was unfunny. But because you think Steve laughing at something so trivial is- you don't even know what to call it. You just like the sight of it.

"Oh that's- that's good stuff. Thanks." he says.

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It's ten days until Halloween and Steve Harrington is about to lose his mind. For the past few weeks of October he's run around town collecting supplies for a Halloween party. No not for people the same age as him. For his younger friends, Dustin and the gang. He knows that this is the first Halloween that the boys have to spend without Will. Well, not the first halloween but one of who knows how many with the Byers family miles away. Steve knows how much the holiday meant to them, he's seen the pictures of their group costumes. And he's honestly just trying to make sure that this holiday is a good one for them.

He's enlisted the help of Robin but he feels like somehow there is just so much work to be done between the two of them that it'll probably go wrong. He's on his break now and he's crossing off things from the list that he or Robin has done. And the list is still two pages long.

You walk into the family video, but it's unusual. Steve knows this because you make it a point to not come into his place of work before four o'clock. He hasn't had the balls to ask why, he figures it

something to do with Keith or Robin. But that thought gets pushed to the back of his mind. He watches as you walk straight to the counter and up to him. You've got a big plastic bag in your hands, he can't tell what's in it.

"Hey what's goin on?" he asks.

"Ask me what's in the bag Harrington." you say.

He eyes you for a second before he tried to tilt his head to get a better view. You pull the bag back and point at him.

"No cheating."

He lets out a 'hmp'. His eyes dart around like he's trying to think, but honestly he doesn't know what could be in that bag besides old tapes that you probably never returned. And so he goes with that.

"How about tapes that are past due?" he tries.

You tsk, "Now, you know I am an upright citizen. I get my tapes in before rental time."

He laughs at that, at your joke. Honestly since the day he's first met you he's been laughing because of how funny you were. It wasn't forced, like you were trying to make him laugh. It was more like you were just a funny person. A funny person that he found funny. Yeah that could describe it. Steve doesn't know what else to guess. Unless you went on a shopping spree, but you hardly seem like the type to brag about it. He thinks he knows you well enough at this point.

"I don't know, just tell me."

You set the bag on the counter and open it up a bit. Sure enough Steve is staring into the bag that holds an assortment of things, things that were on his list to complete for the Halloween party. He looks up at you surprised, and confused as to how you've gotten things he's needed.

"Robin told me about your party, and I asked if she needed help with getting stuff. So here's the stuff."

There's a silence in the family video. You're looking at him and he's looking at you and the stuff in the bag. His eyes darting back and forth. Steve is trying to process the fact that he didn't think of Robin telling you about the party sooner. But he's also trying to think about the words to say, to thank you for doing this.

"If I overstepped I'm sorry, I can take it back- actually I think some of this was final sale so I'd probably have to give it away or something." you say.

Steve shakes his head. He continues shaking his head as he reaches over the counter and engulfs you in a hug. He can feel you let out a breath of relief and hug him back.

"No, this is great. Thank you so much. I was honestly losing it thinking about all the stuff I still had to get." he says.

He settles his head in-between the crook of your shoulder. Steve can feel your hand moving in circular motions on his back, were you soothing him? He doesn't know if he should ask, but it feels great. He shuts his eyes, for just a second.

"If it's any consolation, I think this party is gonna be great."

"You're totally invited by the way. I was going to ask you before, but this is like a guaranteed admission."

"Thanks Steve"

And he's still hugging you.

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You pass the slushy over to Steve.

"I got a job at the cinema."

Steve stops drinking. He puts the slushy down on the hood of the car actually and turns to you fully. You can see the big dopey smile on his face, it reaches his eyes.

"That's awesome! I'm happy for you."

"Thanks."

"Wait you don't sound like you're happy about it."

You sigh. He was right. You weren't really happy about it because this meant that your free time would be down considerably. Which also meant less hangout time between the two of you. And Robin too. You barely hang out with her as it is because of her job, but this job will probably make it impossible for the both of you. Yes you could make some money, but you wouldn't have much of a social life.

"I'm just thinking about the hours I'll have to spend working. And then when I finally do have off I'll probably be so tired and not want to do anything." you say.

"Oh."

"I mean I still wanna hangout with you and Robin. I just feel like this job will eat into that time."

Steve nods his head at your words. You watch as he turns around and faces forward. As dumb as it sounds you feel like you just backhanded him or something. Your parents had told you that you needed to do something to keep busy. Since college was off the table, you didn't see the need for it, the next available option to get them off your back was a job.

"Don't worry about it. We can still make time to hangout." he says.

"I can let you know my schedule and we can cross reference. Figure something out." you say.

"Hey," he nudges your shoulder with his own, "I know you're like my friend and what not, so we'll do our best."

"Speaking of which, there's a of Pride and Prejudice at Family Video that has a blank tape in it."

"Excuse me?"

"Call it an insurance policy. You can call me in at anytime to question me about it."

Steve chuckles lightly, "I think I will."

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"Hey there, got a sec?" you ask Steve.

He nods his head. Getting up from his seat on the couch he follows you over to the front door and onto the front porch of the Henderson's property. It had been going great honestly. You could see all the kids loved it and Steve. You got to see first hand how much of a bond he had with them all and it was heart-warming. Something about it made you build up the courage to talk to him in private.

Robin has basically told you that you should just confess that you're feeling non-non-friendly feelings for Steve about a week ago. When you two were knocking down the final few things on the list for the party. She had trapped you in a line of questioning and basically got you to admit your feelings without you even realizing it. It kinda of scared the shit out of you to be honest. Would Steve even see you in that way.

"So what did you wanna talk about?" he asks.

You begin to rock on the balls of your feet. It was a nervous habit you had since- since you'd been able to conceptualize thoughts actually. Steve reached out and placed his hands on your shoulders to steady you. It made you nervously chuckle and stand in place. Yeah he knew you were nervous. This wasn't gonna end well.

"I just wanted to tell you that..." you trail off.

Steve is looking at you. He's always looking at you when you're looking at him you realize. Like he wants you to know that he sees you. The first few times you hung out it took you off guard. You couldn't tell what he was thinking back then. And now you don't know what he's thinking but you really don't mind that he's looking at you. It feels comfortable.

"I've got a thing to go to, a gathering kind of thing. Outside of Indiana."

"Cool." he says as he lets go of your shoulders.

"Yeah," you clear your throat, "and I needed to- I wanted to ask if you would take care of my dog."

Steve looks bewildered. Like on the verge of popping a vein at how confused he is. His eyebrows meet in the middle, once and then twice. Then he puts his hands on his hip and looks at you, "You have a dog?"

"Yeah. We've never hung out at my house, I'm realizing, so you've never seen him. His name is Dracula."

"You named your dog after a vampire?"

You chuckle a bit.

"That's not the point Steve. Can you watch him?" you ask.

Steve nods his head, "Yeah sure. I love dogs."

"Are you parents gonna be okay with a dog in their house?"

He makes this face that lets you know they probably wouldn't. That his parents would have something to say to him if he were to bring a dog, that wasn't even his, home. And he would take the lashings.

"I can make it work."

"It'll probably be best if you stay at my house with him." you say.

The words come out of your mouth before you fully think about the implications. Steve in your home, in your room? But you can't take it back. You're an idiot with a foot in their mouth and you can't take it back because you know it would be weird with Steve if you did.

"You want me to stay in your house and watch your dog?" he stutters.

"Yeah I trust you." you say.

What you don't say is that usually you have your neighbors watch your dog if you were to go somewhere without him. And those neighbors were going to be home for the duration of you being away at your family gathering. In hindsight you should've just asked them

instead of turning what was supposed to be a confession into a babysitting job. Steve probably has a lot on his plate already without a dog-

"I'll do it. When do I get to meet the little guy?"

"Dracula is actually a Doberman."

"Is that big? I'm not good on like types of dogs."

"Yeah he's big Steve."

3. end - "songbird"

Summary for the Chapter:

fluff.

Notes for the Chapter:

it's been a long time, and I'm so sorry. I'm graduating uni so the work load has been high. I just wanted to come back to this little story because of the recent s4 announcement. hope you all enjoy <3

After you come back to Hawkins from your gathering, you thanked Steve for dog-sitting. He told you that it was fun to not be in his house for a bit. And while that made you sad but you know a bit about his parents, you were glad that you could provide him with an escape. So your botched attempt at confessing your feelings for him didn't go that wrong. Not if Steve could flash that charming smile at you like that when he left your house when you came back.

Things between the two of you are normal after that. You can't quite convince yourself again to tell him about your feelings. And it's partly because you're scared of not being friends after if he doesn't return them. But another part is because you want him to be happy and have someone to turn to. You will gladly push down your feelings if you get to keep Steve as a friend.

This is how the next two months go. You try to push away those cliché thoughts about Steve whenever you two hang out. Like when he offers you some his drink and there's only one straw. Or when he tries to scare you during horror movie nights by ticking you, but he fails because you don't scare too easily. And you definitely won't be scared of Steve poking your sides. Or when-

You get the point.

Things don't change for the most part.

Except when Steve talks about applying to schools. That's when it hits

you. You were so scared of driving him away because of your feelings you didn't think about the fact that his world consists of other things. Things that are not you. Like school. Which he's talked about some times whenever you hang out. But when he says directly that he's looking up applications and filling them out, you go still.

"Are you okay?" he asks.

You try to shake you thoughts away from your mind. But you really can't.

"Yeah I'm fine. So what schools would you consider?" you ask.

"I mean I don't know it's just a thought." he says.

You look at him. He looks a bit defeated at the thought of this whole thing. As his friend you needed to set him straight. He was a great person and a smart guy. If he really wanted to do this he could. And you would help him, no matter how much it hurt.

"I hope you know that you're really smart and any school would be lucky to have you." you say.

"Yeah right,"

"No I'm serious, I'm sure you could apply right now and at least five schools would leap at the opportunity to have you! If I was a school I would literally pay your whole ride. And that's a lot of money." you start rambling.

And Steve can't help the laugh that starts in his chest and tumbles its way out of his mouth. His eyes crinkle and you know you've got him. He puts his hand on his shoulder to stop you from talking yourself in circles.

"Okay I believe you, I got it. I got it." he says.

You nod you head.

Then there's a silence between you two. One that isn't sad. Yeah you might be losing the guy who you care for in a lot of ways but maybe he'll be your 'one that got away'. The guy you can tell future co-

workers about. The guy you generalize when you have kids of your own and tell them how to spot a good guy. It would be hell to lose Steve in a bad way. But this wouldn't be so bad. Not if he can go out into the world and be great. Especially if you can convince him to do so.

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When you drop by the video store he's closing an envelope at the checkout. He's been talking about sending in applications since that night. And you've been helping. You practically have his home address memorized from helping him fill out the basic information. He's thinking about getting out of Hawkins. Ohio is not too far and they have great schools. So does Illinois.

"You here for trouble?" he asks.

At his words, you fake gasp. Your hands cover your heart in disbelief.

"Me? Oh, Mr.Harrington I would never I am appalled!" you snicker.

Like usual, you head to your favorite section horror. Everything there you've seen at least twice. You love horror but its' getting boring now. Maybe you should switch it up a bit? You eyes move above the metal video gates and over to Steve. He doesn't notice that you're looking at him for a few moments. When he does he tilts his head to the side in confusion.

You slowly move away from the horror section and to the ungodly section that you have begged Steve to never bring up. Sci-fi. His eyes widen the closer you move towards it. And when you finally get there he smiles wide.

"What is this?" he asks.

But he's not really asking. He's already making his way from the checkout table over to you. As he does you cross your arms over your chest and ponder your choices.

"I've been meaning to take a stab," you laugh, "at this section for a while. Recommendations?"

Steve gasps a bit.

Then he turns to the video display. He looked between all the selections and then picks one of them up. Slowly he presents it to you. In his hands is Back to The Future. There's a brain cell soles dedicated to horror movies that pops at the mere sight of it.

"Summarize this movie in on sentence." you say.

He hums to himself. Even makes a show of rubbing his chin. You watch his brown eyes dart around the room for a couple more seconds before he seems to have an idea on his mind.

"It's a love story if you think about it." he says.

You raise your eyebrows at that. He nods his head.

"Okay Steve. Give me the love story."

Steve drapes an arm around you and walks the both of you to checkout. He does so while praising the intellectual creations that are Doc and McFly. You can feel your face getting hot but you push it down. Maybe this is gonna be one of the moments you think about when you get older and tell your 'one that got away' story. He unravels himself from you and assumes his employment position and checks you out. Your eyes go to the envelopes he has left out.

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You should be asleep.

It's 3 am but you can't settle at all. Steve had invited you to a party he's throwing. He got into one of the schools he applied to. But he's being really secretive about which one it is. You're really proud that he got in. But a part of you is scared that he's going to be miles away from you. This this is where your 'one that got away' story starts. He goes off and meets new people and promises to keep in touch but time and distance sever this friendship the two of you have. And then you'll hear that he's made something of himself. Maybe from your neighbors or in passing from your parents. And you'll be left knowing his address and he won't even remember you.

You curse yourself in the dark.

Maybe you needed a walk. Why go alone?

Dracula had been your responsibility solely because you begged your family for a dog. When you were younger it was a bit easier. Someone would be home to look after him for the most part and whenever you were home you'd assume the role of caregiver. Then you got older and had less to do. That being college wasn't really something you wanted and you had a part-time job already. So Dracula was your responsibly 24/7.

You pull on one of your long coats and some boots.

When you leave your room, he waits at the front door. It was like he knew you were up and were going to take a walk. In his mouth was his leash. You took it from him and strapped him in. Quickly you grabbed your keys and headed out the door.

It's a dark night. You're glad your dog is big during times like these. Who knows what could be hiding in the shadows?

That's why when Dustin comes from in between a bush you let out a scream.

"Christ you're loud." he says.

"What the h- why are you out at 3 am?" you ask him.

"My cat got loose." he answers.

"I thought your cat died?" you ask again.

He lets out a huff of air. Then his shoulders slump a bit.

"Do you know which school he picked?" he asks.

Oh.

You realize that he's out here for the same reason you're out here. You're both worried about losing Steve Harrington.

"I don't. Sorry. But you'll still be friends no matter where he goes." you speak.

Dustin doesn't make any move to agree with you. This makes you feel even worse. So you nudge his shoulder to get him to pay close attention to you and what you're about to say.

"I know that he's been a great friend to you. And I've only just came into his life, I really hope you don't feel like I took him away from you. I know we spend a lot of time together." you say.

He shakes his head, "No it's not- I get that. He spent time with you because he likes you."

"And he likes you too."

"No that'd be weird."

What? Your face scrunches in confusion out of your control. What was Dustin trying to- he couldn't possibly be trying to say that Steve likes you? How could he know that? Steve is like one of his best friends but, no that can't be right. Steve doesn't like you like that, right? Wouldn't he have said something? Wouldn't you have picked up on it? All the movies you watch, you pride yourself on being able to see things like this.

"Dustin-"

"Oh shit! I shouldn't have said that."

What?

The boy starts taking off. He's like a man track star with the way he's running away from you. His sudden departure makes Dracula bark. You calm your dog down a bit but but the time you look back to see where Dustin is, he's gone. Your heart is beating out of your chest.

What?

You stand there in the dark with Dracula for as long as it takes to remember it's 3am. When you do, you look down at Dracula. Dracula. Steve took that baby-sitting job way too quickly. You thought it was

weird, not in a bad way but like in a way you couldn't describe. Could it be? Dracula tilts his head to the side, trying to understand you no doubt.

"Let's go back home, boy."

His ears pick up at the mention of him. You smile.

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The party isn't really a party. It's you, Steve, Robin and her brother whom you're meeting for the first time. Them and the kids. There's no decorations or fancy stuff out either. You don't really know why you were nervous about coming. Or well you did but you wanted to blame it on something else.

You haven't had a moment alone with Steve since that night Dustin told you Steve liked or likes you. Which didn't make sense. Practically speaking you should have had a moment alone with him. By some stroke of luck every time you've hung out one of the kids were there, or Robin. Or even Keith. Now Keith was the anomaly. The kids and Robin? Yeah you think Dustin called in reinforcements for telling Steve's secret.

So here you are in the backyard clutching a red solo cup. He hasn't said which school he's going to yet. It's eating at you. So much so that your nails are now nubs. Next are the hangnails around your fingers. By the end of the night you were gonna need bandages.

"Hey."

You turn around. There in the doorway of the patio is Steve. Of course it's him. You half expect one of the kids to jump out of the pool and join the two of you. But since your legs are dangling in the chlorine and the lights are on below, you know that's not possible. You wave at him silently. Words are failing you.

He joins you. But he doesn't lift up his pant legs, so they are soaked upon admission into the water. His shoulder brushes against yours with how close he's sitting next to you. He faces you.

"Any reason you're out here alone?" he asks.

"No reason in particular no."

"No? not even at the fact that you're gonna miss me?"

There it is. He's going away. He chose a school that is miles away from you. He's gonna forget you. But you can't forget him. You really can't. So you turn to look at him, if this is gonna be one of the last times you see Steve Harrington you're gonna take it in.

"Your school is far?" you ask.

He smiles a bit, "Yeah."

Should you tell him how you feel? Should you tell him that you might know how he feels via Dustin? Should you- oh you forgot to congratulate him!

"I'm really proud of you. I mean it." you say.

His smile falters a bit and then he looks away from you. You think to yourself that you might've said something wrong. What did you say? Actually what did he want to hear?

"Thanks."

"Steve I have to talk to you about something." you blurt.

He looks at you with worry, "What is it?"

Should you? Should you really do this? Open this can of worms when he's going to go on and do great things? You could have the memories couldn't you? The movie nights and the jokes at the video store. The picture he left of him and Dracula for you when you got some from your gathering. You could keep all of those things. You can't keep him...

You sigh, "I ran into Dustin a couple of nights ago. He seemed really sad about you possibly leaving for school."

There's a look that passes his face. One you don't recognize.

"He's gonna be okay. He's got the other kids. And Robin."

"Wait what? That's all you're gonna say?" you ask.

"I mean yeah, I'm just going to school. It's nothing major."

Your ears were ringing a bit. The words leaving his mouth didn't make sense to you. Him and Dustin were connected at the hip. They were like brothers at this point. Could Steve think so little of his friendship with him? What does that mean for the two of you? Man, you thought it might be a couple of months away at school before he forgets about you but now , it might be a matter of days.

"Steve are you being serious right now? He's like your best friend." you say.

"I know, but Tech won't do any harm to our friendship. Do you think so?" he asks.

What? Did- Tech? Hawkins Tech? He's going to Hawkins Tech?

"Wait what did you just say?"

"I said-"

"I heard you but before you said that it was far. You asked if I would miss you!" you say.

He laughs, "I know I was just messing with you. Wanted to see if you would miss me."

"Steve of course I would miss you. I-"

There it is. The feeling that's been on the tip of your tongue for a long time coming. You stopped yourself once again.

"You what?"

"I- don't remember what I was going to say."

He nods his head slowly. This night is going to be one your regret for the rest of your life. He's going to Tech. He's not going miles and miles away. He's right here. He's right here and you can reach for him if only you tried. Should you? You're looking right at him and him at

you. You don't think you've looked into his eyes for this long before. It's making you dizzy.

"Well, we have time," his eyes crinkle a bit, "so you don't have to rush."

You nudge his shoulder with yours. The both of you laugh. There's a silence between the two of you. Not a sad one. But something more hopeful. Something about it is giving you a boost.

"I also wanted to say that when I ran into Dustin the other night he said something."

"Something like what?"

"like me."

"What?"

"He slipped that you like me in a way that you don't like him."

"Good thing I'm going to Tech then?"

"Yeah. That and I like you too."

And then Steve Harrington chuckles. His eyes crinkle. You take it all in. But not because you might lose him. No, because he's finally in arms reach. He's right here. With you. All of his beauty marks and full body chuckles and warm touches.

"You know I find that very interesting." he says. Then he rubs his chin, and pouts his lip out.

"Really?" you ask.

"Yeah. Because it seems highly impossible."

"Not any more impossible than me watching a Marty McFly."

"You did do that."

Another silence falls between the two of you. You don't really care to describe it. You just like being this close to him. And he's looking at

you and you have not taken your eyes off of him. It's really great. Forgetting the fact that you had to watch a sci-fi movie to get to this point, and his pants are soaking in the pool. His eyes are darting down to your lips and you start leaning in.

The distance between you collapses as your lips touch. He's smiling into the kiss and that makes you smile too.

From behind you there's a sudden commotion. You two pull apart and look for the cause.

Dustin, Will, and Robin are at the patio door. Dustin and will have their thumbs up. Meanwhile Robin has a smile on her face.

"Finally. I could call this from the beginning."